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Contact: Erik Thorson, Communications Director, 763-324-4612, or e-mail:
Erik.Thorson@co.anoka.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ground Broken on New Anoka County Emergency Communications Center

Anoka County officials, partner representatives and community members attended a groundbreaking ceremony today for the county's new, 42,000-square-foot Emergency Communications Center off Hanson Boulevard in Andover.

The facility will combine both 911 emergency telecommunications operations and the county's radio shop, which provides and maintains all radio equipment used by law enforcement and emergency telecommunicators in Anoka County.

Most of the capital for this project came from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.

The new facility will address many of the deficiencies of the current location used by Emergency Communications in the basement of the Anoka County Government Center. Employees who work there deal with a cramped workspace, no access to daylight, no breakroom or training room, noise issues because of low ceilings, and more.

"In addition to improving working conditions for our current group of emergency telecommunicators, management and radio shop staff, the new, one-story facility will allow for future operational modifications," said District 2 Anoka County Commissioner Julie Braastad, who serves as chair of the county's Public Safety Committee. "This facility will be a tremendous asset when it comes to shifting our emergency response needs as our county grows and changes."

Commissioner Matt Look, chair, Anoka County Board of Commissioners, lauded everyone involved with making this project a reality and said the county is looking forward to continuing to work with project consultants.

"I want to thank Wold Architects and Engineers and ICS Consulting, who have worked with Anoka County for the planning and design of this facility and will be heavily involved in the

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Office: 763-324-4700 ▲ Fax: 763-324-5490

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construction process,” he said. “The renderings they’ve put together look fantastic, and I’m sure the finished building will be just as good.”

Look also said the mental health supports that will be available at the new ECC/Radio Shop will be a great benefit to employees.

“The improvements, such as a quiet room for staff to step away and collect themselves privately and a wellness/fitness room to help staff relieve stress will be such an asset,” Look said. “Emergency telecommunications employees deal with many high stress situations and allowing them opportunities to decompress will help our overall operation.”

Construction on the ECC/Radio shop is projected to be finished in June 2024.

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From left: Anoka County Commissioners Mandy Meisner, Julie Jeppson, Mike Gamache, Jeff Reinert, Matt Look, Julie Braastad, Scott Schulte, and Anoka County Sheriff Brad Wise break ground on the combined Emergency Communications Center/Radio Shop in Andover April 10.

DK:bv